# EYES

an original story and treatment

by

John Carpenter

Registered: Writer's Guild of America, West. Nov. 2, 1974

A psychic is a person sensitive to forces outside the sphere of physical science or knowledge.

We have been taught for centuries to divide the world into three parts: the spirtual, the scientific, and the unknown. ESP has become a catch-phrase to describe just about everything neither science nor religion can explain.

But Extra Sensory Perception may simply be the untapped, undisciplined gate to the incredible hidden powers of the human mind.

SHEILA MARS is a pretty, intelligent, self-willed woman who lives in a small apartment on the top floor of a huge, towering old building in Hollywood. From her picture window she can see all of LA stretched out before her and below fifteen stories to the street. Sheila lives an intense life for a woman of twenty-eight. She is a free-lance photographer. Her apartment is filled with her work, photographs of just about everything from violence and crime to poverty and old

age. Her specialty is faces and eyes. She has hundreds of photos of strange etched faces with piercing eyes, studies from real life all over her walls.

Sheila is a loner. Her affairs with men are neither serious nor promiscuous nor long. She is fulfilled in her work. Her own boss. She lives a self-directed life with no self-deception.

Sheila is photographing people on the street in a tight, cluttered Silverlake neighborhood. She passes a cluster of patrol cars and ambulances outside a bungalow apartment. She waits and watches. People milling around, talking, anxiously watching the front door of the apartment. Medics emurge carrying a sheet-covered body on a stretcher. Half-way to the ambulance the sheet slips off: a young woman, dead, her eyes open and staring. Sheila quickly snaps a picture.

In her apartment Sheila studies the picture of the dead woman. She stares at the dead-open eyes, the expression of violent terror on the face. All afternoon she keeps coming back to the photograph, scrutinizing it, taking in the details.

That night Sheila Mars has a nightmare.

Something more than just a dream. A vision. A psychic experience.

She sees the brutal murder of a young woman through the eyes of the murderer. The woman stops on a dark street and accepts a light for her cigarette, then a man's hand opens a straight razor and slashes the woman's throat.

The vision is so powerful that Sheila awakens filled with a churning nausea, a band of icy steel locked around her chest so tightly she can hardly breathe. That morning she discovers that a murder has taken place the night before exactly the same as in her dream at approximately the same time of night.

The second night she dreams again. A woman is beaten to death with a lead pipe. Again it is a dream through the eyes of the killer. And again, the next day, she discovers that the murder in her dream was real, just as she had dreamed it, in every detail.

Sheila is shaken by the dreams. She stays in her apartment all day staring at the photograph of the dead woman. That night she goes out with MICHAEL, a young law student, but spends the evening in silence. Michael makes the customary overtures but Sheila returns to her apartment alone and sits alternately staring at the twinkling city lights and the photograph.

A few nights later she dreams another murder more ghastly and senseless than the others: a baby sitter and a young girl are killed, hung from the second floor bannister in an east Hollywood home. And the third murder is also very real, splashed across the morning paper headlines.

Sheila is paralyzed by the dreams. She can't concentrate on her work. Nor can she sleep at night. She lies awake staring at the photograph of the dead woman, hoping the dream won't come.

A PSYCHIATRIST tells Sheila what she expects to hear - she is working too hard on her photography, becoming too involved in the brutal realities she photographs.

She approaches the police, a detective sergeant NEVILLE, a hard grayish man who never smiles. He listens to her story neither believing nor disbelieving. "When you've got someone out there senselessly butchering people we've got to listen to everything," says Neville. "We believe one man is committing these murders. If you come up with anything that might help us stop him, let me know."

Sheila spends the evening with Michael, telling him what has happened to her. Finally they end up at her apartment in bed together, Michael asleep, Sheila staring up at the ceiling. The vision returns. She wakes Michael up. "I'm <u>not asleep</u> and I can see it." She describes the strangulation of another woman to Michael. The man's hands thrust a spool

of ¼" recording tape into the hands of the dead woman.

They both see the news coverage of the murder on T.V. the next morning, except there is no mention of the recording tape.

Sheila and Michael both go to Neville. "I wasn't asleep. It wasn't a dream. I told Michael everything, just as I saw it." She asks about the recording tape. "How did you know about that?" asks Neville, astounded. "We didn't release that. You couldn't have known."

Puzzled, Neville plays them the tape. "I am faceless," says the voice on the tape. "I've never been arrested. I haven't even gotten a parking ticket. You won't ever catch me. Whenever I feel like it, from now on, someone else is going to die."

Another vision, the same as the others. As Sheila sees it, wide-awake, terrified, Michael calls Neville. Over the phone he listens to Sheila's description. Another woman murdered, another spool of tape in her hand. An hour later Neville calls back. He followed the leads and descriptions from her vision and found the murdered woman exactly as she had seen it. He asks them both to come down to the station and listen to the second tape.

"You couldn't catch me if you wanted to," says the voice. "I never leave anything behind. . ." A pause, a realization.

Then: "There's someone watching me!"

Sheila and Neville meet with a parapsychologist, DR. ENGLAND. He is an expert in ESP.

"You are psychic," says England. "Some psychics can see auras around people, others can hear thoughts. You can see through someone else's eyes. Somehow you locked into a killer. Perhaps it was your fascination with the photograph of the dead woman, your mind flexing and expanding its unconscious power, enough to reach the last thing that woman saw, the face of her murderer. But now there's a link between the signals fed to the visual cortex and the other mental processes. An emotional overlap. Now the man senses you are inside of him looking through his eyes."

Neville shows Sheila and England a map of LA. The location of each murder has been circled and numbered. From the first in Silverlake each successive killing has moved closer and closer to Sheila's apartment in Hollywood.

(CONT'D)

They perform a test that afternoon. Sheila will attempt to link in to the man's sight without being asleep. Perhaps they can catch him. Sheila is joined by two other psychics, an OLD WOMAN and a middle-aged MAN. They sit in a sound-proofed room, England and Neville watching and listening in a glass booth. The three psychics concentrate their powers. Sheila suddenly links. She can no longer see the room she is in, the psychics, England or Neville, or herself. She sees through the man's eyes, his room, his hands lighting cigarettes and drinking straight whiskey. What does he look like, where does he live? She can't find out, he never leaves his room, he never <u>looks</u> at anything that would indicate where he is, an address on a letter, his house number. He never looks in a mirror. The man's vision is tormented, restless. He knows she's there, stronger than ever with the added power of the two psychics.

The vision ends. Both England and Neville fully believe her. She must try again that night to link in to the man without being asleep with the help of the psychics. They must try to stop him.

After the test Sheila is driving around aimlessly, waiting for night and the second try. Suddenly her point of view of the street out the front windshield disappears and she sees again through his eyes. Instead of the street she can only

see him walking down a hall and into his room.

Her car swerves all over the street. She is locked in on him. She can't break it.

The man looks in a mirror. In his thirties, a wild, deranged insolent face with dark, intense eyes. He stares at himself. "Who are you?" he screams.

Sheila smashes into a telephone pole. The vision fades.

Two weeks later Sheila is recovering from the accident. She can't get out of her bed with giant casts on her legs.

Neville and Michael visit her. She no longer has the vision. The accident broke the link. She is happy, rested. Even with the description of the man's face the police can't find him. However, there have been no more murders since her accident.

That night Sheila has another vision. She locks in on the killer's black, psychotic nightmare. He is asleep and she sees his dream. Wide awake, she lives his nightmare of self-hatred and torment, a mad plunge down a sewer drain pipe into a cesspool teaming with great, dark things hovering out of sight beneath the surface reaching up at his legs.

The next morning Sheila cannot see through her own eyes, only the killer's. The link is permanent. She struggles and finds the telephone and reaches Neville. A manhunt begins.

Lying in bed unable to move Sheila walks the streets with the killer, eats lunch in a dingy coffee shop, aimlessly wanders through the city, restless, haunted. She describes everything to Neville in a squad car via telephone: street signs, well-known buildings. An army of police cars cover the area, moving in closer and closer. At dusk the killer returns to his apartment and Sheila sees the address. Neville and the police move in.

Through the man's point of view she sees Neville and the other officers arrest him.

They are driving back to the police station. Neville stares at the man, thinking. "I've got to try this," he says finally. "Can you see me, Sheila? Can you hear me?"

She can, like a receiver outside her body. She watches, a mute voyeur.

(CONT'D)

"She's inside of me, isn't she?" says the man. "Who is she?"

"She lives high up above the rest of us where she can see things no one else can."

There is a pause, then pandemonium. The man jumps forward, struggles with Neville and the officer at the wheel. Shouting, slashing, wild subjective action. Sheila is seeing and living it miles away.

The squad car crashes. The driver is killed, Neville unconscious. The man looks through Neville's address book. He stops on a name: Sheila Mars.

He jumps out of the car and runs, hides, then runs again.

He stops by a parked car and stares at his reflection in the window. He grins evily. "I know who you are, Sheila. And I know where to find you!"

Sheila sees the man approach her apartment building, walk in through the lobby, get the elevator, punch the button to her floor. She scrambles madly for the telephone, but knocks it out of her reach. She sees him walking down the hall to her door. She searches for the phone receiver. He is fumbling with the lock and clicking it open.